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AUTHOR Bernknopf, Stan; Ware, William B.
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ABSTRACT

For the past four years the Georgia Department of Education has been involved in a statewide effort to establish standards and procedures for certification of educational personnel based on competency demonstration. As part of this effort, a project was commissioned to develop a performance-based system for the certification of school counselors. The present paper describes various aspects of the model which are a result of this developmental effort. Major topics include: premises of the project, procedures, proposed certification system, criterion referenced exam, and on-the-job performance requirements. (Author)

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PERFORMANCE BASED COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION

Dr. Stan Bernknopf
Project Director, Pioneer CESA Guidance Project
P.O. Box 548
Cleveland, GA 30528

Dr. William B. Ware
Principal, Fair Street School
Gainesville, GA 30501

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INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the past decade competency-based strategies have been used as a means of certifying school personnel. Although the primary emphasis has been teacher certification, some states have attempted to develop competency-based guidelines aimed at certification procedures for school counselors. These attempts were most evident during the late 1960's when the professional journals started to review the concepts and rationale underlying such a certification procedure and their implications for guidance. While the literature, in general, was highly supportive, it was not until the early 1970's that a few operational programs started to appear in print. For the most part, these programs focused on the need for the identification of skills required of counselors and the assessment of the counselor's demonstration of such skills. These initial attempts are characterized by the procedures developed by the State of Washington (Allen, Cady & Drummond, 1969; Brammer & Springer, 1971; Springer & Brammer, 1971), the Behavioral System Training Program at Stanford University, the Systematic Counseling Mode of Michigan State University and the Microcounseling Approach of Ivey, Normington, Miller, Morrell, and Haase (Horan, 1972). Perhaps the most comprehensive program has been presented by the Guidance and Counseling Staff of North Texas State University (1973). In a services-oriented approach the North Texas State group has described the competencies which might serve as a base for the preparation of professional level guidance personnel.

In 1972, the Georgia State Board of Education authorized the staff of the Georgia Department of Education to prepare a proposal for establishing guidelines and standards for certification of school personnel based on competency demonstration. The purpose of these standards was to assure the development and maintenance of professional competence in educational personnel. During the academic year 1973-1974, funds became available for a project which had as its purpose the development of a competency-based system for the certification of school counselors in Georgia.

The purpose of this paper is to present an overview of the model which is emerging from that project. There are several parts to this paper. First, the premises or principles on which the project was based are presented. This is followed by a section on the processes or procedures which have taken place in the last five years. The third section describes the proposed model for counselor certification. The remaining sections describe, in summary form, some of the major elements of the project.

PREMISES OF THE PROJECT

Some of the earliest efforts of the project staff were directed towards developing a conceptual frame of reference. To a large degree, this procedure involved explicating the values or assumptions which would underly any attempt at developing a system for certifying school counselors. In effect, we asked ourselves, "What important principles should be built into the certification process?" It

should be noted that we did not set aside a certain period of time in which we would all sit down and"clarify our values"; rather, it was something that arose quite naturally. As we started to make decisions about the nature and direction of the project, many of our values became self-evident and developed into the premises of the project. These premises are presented below.

Premise #1. Guidance programs should be based on student needs.

Analysis of previous attempts at developing counselor training and/or certification programs indicated that many of them had begun by querying various groups of people about what they considered to be appropriate guidance goals. As such, school administrators, teachers, counselors, and in rare cases, people outside the school system such as employers and parents, were contacted and questioned. Although this procedure provides an adequate beginning, it eliminates students (the direct consumers) from contributing to the development of goals for a program which, theoretically, should have considerable impact on them and the development of their own life goals. It was, therefore, decided to include samples of students in the groups of people questioned about student needs. Only then could programs be developed that would meet perceived student needs.

Premise #2. Colleges and Universities Train, State Departments of Education Certify

On the surface, this may seem a radical assumption. Actually, it is somewhat conservative. Consider the following: Traditionally, certification has been a joint effort between institutions of higher learning and State Departments of Education. Through the "Approved

program" concept, completion of prescribed course work was tantamount to certification. The State Department's role was thus one of approving institutional programs and verifying individual applicants' transcripts. While this procedure was expedient (and, at times efficient) it left unanswered many questions of individual counselor's effectiveness; weaknesses do not necessarily appear in a summation of courses, grades and credits. As a result, the project took the position that the certification process would be independent of the training process: colleges and universities would be responsible for training and the State Department of Education responsible for certification. While procedures for certification are still open to question, the right of states to set certification requirements which includes establishing minimum standards has consistently been upheld in the courts.

Premise #3. Competency has both Knowledge and Performance Dimensions

Previous research, as well as our own experience, has consistently brought out the fact that acquired "knowledge" does not guarantee adequate "performance." As a result, our certification model considered the assessment of knowledge and performance competencies as if they were, if not mutually exclusive, at least relatively independent factors. While the assessment of knowledge competencies lends itself to paper and pencil testing, the assessment of performance competencies would have to be done through demonstrated on-the-job procedures.

As an aside, the more erudite reader may note that "attitudes" were not included in our definition of "competency." We considered attitudes impossible to define and measure with any degree of consistent reliability or validity. In addition, we also believed attitudes, as presently measured, to be essentially unrelated to performance. A detailed explanation for the exclusion is published elsewhere (Ware, 1975).

Premise #4. Certification Requirements Should be Job-Related

In wording this assumption, we have seriously thought about using the word "must" rather than "should." This is because recent court cases have established "job-relatedness" as an essential criteria for any assessment procedure. (Griggs v. Duke Power Company, 1971; Chance v. Board of Examiners, 1974; Georgia Association of Educators, Inc., Et al. v. Jack P. Nix, 1976). We are not lawyers, although there have been times when we wish we were, and this is not the place to describe the court decisions which have made us sensitive to potential judicial appeals about certification decisions. We simply believed that if we did our best to establish the relatedness of the requirement to actual on-the-job performance, we would not have any trouble. The present model was based on the assumption that these types of assurances could be built in if we used the "pooled judgements" of persons who actually had knowledge of the school counselor's job. This jury was used in both the development of the competencies and the validation of any procedures used to assess these competencies. This procedure is presently accepted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (1974).

Premise #5. Certification Sets Minimal Standards of Effectiveness

It is our belief that the assurance of "minimal competence" is all that is implied by the licensing or certifying procedure. Seeking and retaining the "best" counselor is, and should be, the function of the hiring agency. This would seem to us to be most reasonable. When one goes to a physician the only assurance we have of their competency is the fact that they (the physician) passed various and sundry "boards" and are licensed to practice in their community. The school system is in a similar position. When "hiring" a professional counselor, they know only that this particular person has met minimal requirements and is "certified to practice" their profession in that state. Further, it is up to the employer to assure that the counselor continues to demonstrate their competence; if for no reason other than determining whether or not they should continue to employ them.

Premise #6. The Counselor Should have a Number of Opportunities to Become Certified

This principle is particularly difficult to elucidate. What we are trying to communicate is the fact that the counselor trainee is in control of the certification process. They decide whether or not they want to enter the process, whether or not they want to, as it were, lay their skills on the line. Upon receiving indication that they have been found wanting on some dimension or other, they have control over when, or indeed whether, they choose to be reconsidered for certification.

The certification process itself is explained in detail in another part of this paper. Suffice it to say here that the certification process has been designed as one which does more than make judgments. To

be sure, decisions are made as to the adequacy of the protocols being presented as representative of the applicant's competencies. If the applicant is deemed unprepared or inadequately prepared in certain areas, prescriptions are made to make up the deficiencies. In essence, the process is not interested in excluding candidates; it is aimed at insuring that qualified candidates enter the profession. Given a motivated candidate, there should be minimal failure among applicants.

Premise #7. Effective Guidance Requires a Team Approach

The statement "Guidance requires a team approach" has been made so many times, it has almost become a cliche. The reality or our experience, however, is that like most cliches, the above statement contains more than a grain of truth. In the later part of the 20th century the responsibility for implementation of a guidance program can no longer be delegated solely to the counselor. Fulfillment of the guidance function actually does require a team approach involving not only the counselor, teachers, administrators and other educational personnel, but parents as well.

PROCEDURES

In an effort to develop an entry certification model for school counselors in Georgia which would incorporate the above premises, a management system was designed. The system provided a channel for information that decision makers can use to move through the developmental process. The purpose of the system was to identify the major developmental tasks, in a sequential order, which would result in the

desired outcome. This plan is summarized in Table 1 by major phases and in terms of the Processes, Purposes, and Products contained in each phase. Such a procedure proved to be essential to the Project since so many of the project tasks were process oriented yielding information which was essential to subsequent phases.

The first phase of the project began by designing techniques for gathering information regarding guidance-related student needs. The initial project year was devoted to a comprehensive needs assessment. The student goals produced by this needs assessment then became the basis for the entire project's development. The needs assessment involved a three part investigation: 1) the development of a survey type instrument, 2) interviews with students, and 3) workshops with counselors, teachers, principals and pupil personnel directors. The purpose of the instrument was to validate existing information regarding student needs while at the same time allowing respondents to have input into what they considered to be student needs. The decision to also use interviews was prompted by three assumptions: First, it was felt that students below the 8th grade would not be able to adequately respond to the instrument. Second, the instrument was considered more a validation process than a generating one. This led to the third assumption, that more indepth information would come from personal interviews. The use of workshops was an attempt to involve all parties in the development of the certification model and as a result obtain information which provided another perspective from which to view and develop student needs. Participants composed of counselors,

TABLE 1

Stages in the Development of the Georgia Model for Counselor Certification

	Process	Purpose	Product
Phase 1	Needs Assessment	Validate new and existing information regarding student needs	Hierarchical listing of guidance related student goals
Phase 2	Development of a school counseling model (conceptual framework)	To develop a process for meeting and/or moving students toward identified goals	A series of school programs with identified knowledge and performance competencies for counselors
Phase 3	Verification of competencies	To insure that the competencies were 1) appropriate 2) needed for minimal competence	A refined and verified list of competencies (knowledge and performance)
Phase 4	Development of competency assessment procedures	To insure valid and reliable methods of obtaining information relative to competence of prospective counselors	A. A criterion-referenced test designed to assess mastery of the knowledge competencies B. A set of observation instruments designed to assess mastery of the perf. competencies
Phase 5	Development of training modules	To provide a series of alternative strategies for strengthening diagnosed weaknesses	Six individualized training modules aimed at the performance competencies
Phase 6	Field Test	To determine feasibility of procedures	A certification model

teachers, principals and pupil personnel directors were asked to identify and rank what they perceived to be guidance related student needs.

The three efforts provided for the building of a hierarchical ordering of guidance related goals. The data obtained allowed the staff to develop estimates of the importance of each goal, and identify those goals considered most important. The needs assessment results then served as a basis upon which to build professional competencies.

Phase two of the project involved the creation of a conceptual framework which would represent a process for meeting the previously identified needs of students. This framework resulted in a blueprint for (school) guidance program development. In reality this blueprint yielded many programs, one for each student goal. Each program contained the following components: 1) Rationale, a logical explanation of why the goal is important and how it relates to student needs; 2) Personnel, members of the educational staff who will have direct or indirect impact on the goal (this refers back to the premise that fulfillment of the guidance function requires a team approach); 3) Medium, an existing or innovative activity of the school or community through which the goal may be attained; 4) Content, the cognitive, affective and/or psychomotor elements which are prerequisite to goal attainment and 5) Competencies, the knowledge and skills required of personnel to facilitate the achievement of the goal.

Initially, one program was developed for each identified student goal. Programs varied form fairly unique units aimed at moving a student toward a specific goal, to programs which overlapped a great deal in terms of their components. The more unique a program was, the more unique were the competencies needed (knowledge and performance). The more general a program was, the more overlap there was in competencies needed. As a result, some competencies only appeared to be needed in very specific cases, while others seemed to be required in just about all areas of functioning. In order to make the competencies more appropriate for future training and assessment, specific objectives were written which reflected the intent of the competency.

Phase three of the project involved procedures aimed at verification of the competencies. It was the intent of this phase to support two points: First, that the school programs, as designed, were appropriate for moving students toward the identified goals, and second, that the competencies are needed by school counselors in order to work within such a program. The second question was further refined to read, needed by school counselors in order for them to be considered minimally competent. It should be noted that the emphasis of question two was not on whether or not a minimally competent counselor should have this competency, but rather if having this competency should be required before a counselor is considered minimally competent. Minimally competent was defined as a level of performance which would enable one to be effective at the time of entry into the profession.

Answers to the above questions were obtained through several small

workshops. Participants consisted of counselors, counselor educators and graduate students. All participants were selected on the basis of their knowledge in the content areas. The workshops yielded data which resulted in several changes. A small percent of the competencies were eliminated from all school programs. Many competencies and objectives were eliminated from specific programs while remaining in others. Still other competencies were combined to form new ones. In order to facilitate future manipulations of these competencies and objectives, all competencies were grouped into areas which were called domains. Knowledge competencies were grouped on the basis of similarity of concepts. Performance competencies were grouped on the basis of skill involved.

The fourth phase of the project was aimed at developing competency assessment procedures. Since the initial plan called for certification to be based on two components, knowledge and performance, separate assessment procedures were designed for each component. Criterion-referenced tests were developed to assess mastery of the knowledge competencies. An item pool capable of producing several test forms was created and a qualifying score related to a minimal level of test performance was developed for each form. The assessment procedures associated with on-the-job performance involved the identification of behavioral indicators for each competency and the development of observation instruments. The procedures associated with on-the-job performance were much more complicated than those associated with the assessment of the knowledge competencies. In addition to the development of the instruments, criteria for determining what is acceptable

or not acceptable performance had to be derived. Procedures for assessing the counselor over several sessions by different people had to be worked out ("multiple observers" and "multiple input sources"). In addition, and probably most important, a training procedure had to be developed for "data collectors." The purpose of this training was to provide data collectors with information and experiences necessary to follow the steps in the data collection process and to recognize and rate the indicators of competency in an "on-the-job" setting. The data collectors had to be trained to observe counselors at a significant level of inter-rater reliability. The training format required that a set of protocol materials be produced. These materials consisted of video tape session of counselors in the process of demonstrating various competencies. Each tape showed acceptable as well as unacceptable performance and was accompanied by an answer key which provided correct answers with a rationale.

Phase five involved the development of a set of training materials designed to be used by students who aspire to become school counselors, by entry level counselors who are seeking to demonstrate their skill for certification purposes, and by experienced counselors who wish to enhance their skills. While the major purpose of the model is certification, a system of supportive supervision was felt to be of equal importance. These training materials (modules) provide for such a system. The material may be used in an informal setting or they may be used in a more structured, formal staff development plan. The emphasis of each module is on performance; thus an effort had been made to avoid another text book in the specified area. Upon completing each of the modules the participant should be able to

successfully demonstrate the skills needed to be certified as competent in the performance area.

The sixth phase of the project's development involved the field testing of the major components. The field test was designed to assess the model's effectiveness and efficiency, to identify its strong points as well as its weak points. Specifically, there were three major areas of concern. They were 1) the ability to train counselors in the use of on-the-job observation instruments for the purpose of obtaining data on counselor competence, 2) the feasibility of collecting performance data on-the-job over a period of time, and 3) the value of staff development activities for the training of counselor competencies.

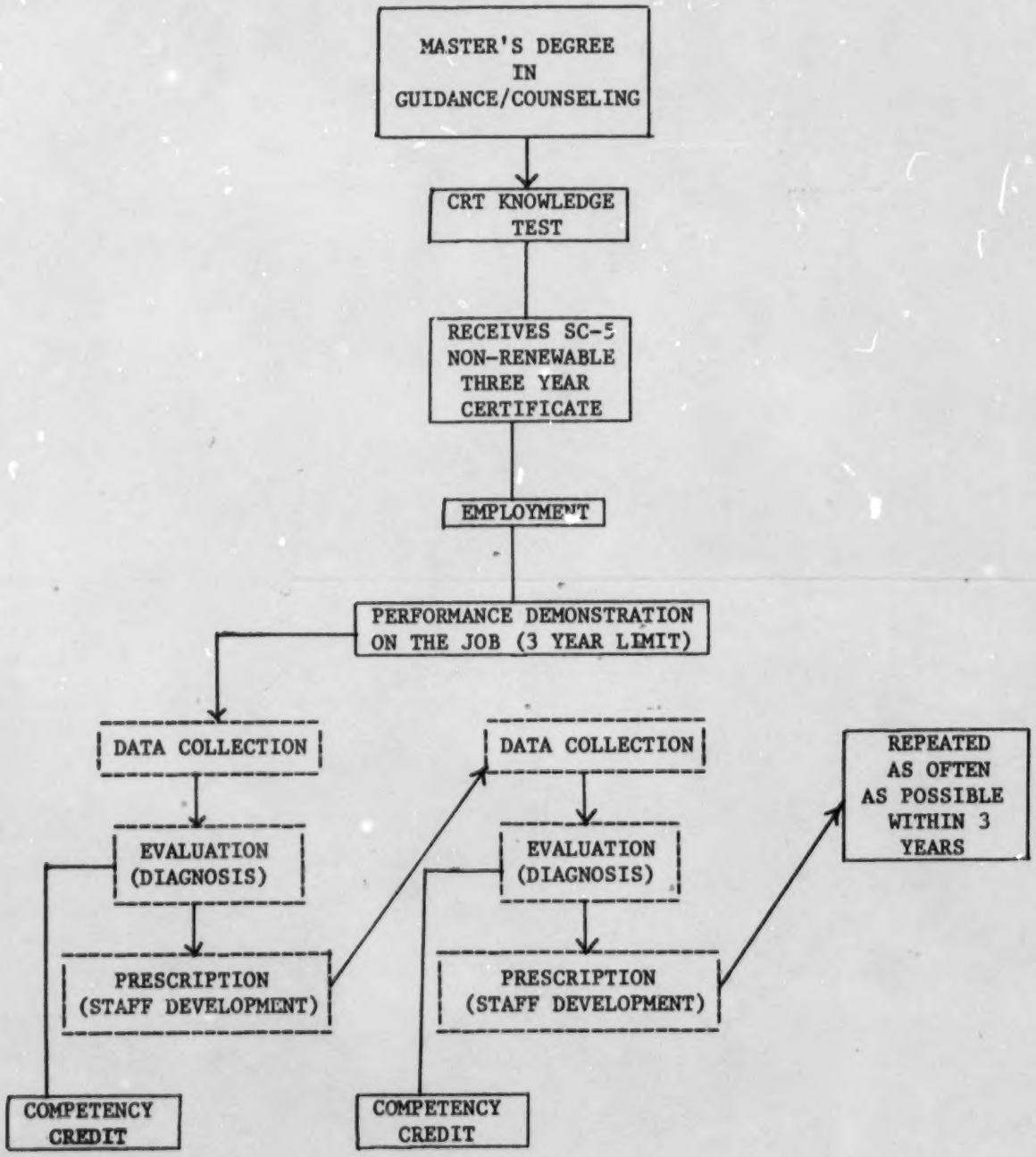
The field test lasted for one year and consisted of training workshops for data collectors, a period of infield data collection, and a three month staff development period. Detailed information was collected from each aspect of the field test. Based on this data, revisions were made which affected all components. These included revisions to the instruments as well as the training procedures employed. All efforts culminated in a certification model which provides a candidate for professional certification an opportunity to demonstrate essential knowledge and performance competencies.

PROPOSED CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

Figure 1 shows a schematic which represents the major components of the certification system. The system is consistent with the state's

FIGURE 1

PROPOSED INITIAL CERTIFICATION SYSTEM
FOR GEORGIA SCHOOL COUNSELORS



overall model for certification of educational personnel and the developmental activities of the project. The essential element in the system is that it provides a candidate for professional certification an opportunity to demonstrate essential knowledge and performance competencies.

Entry into the certification process will require, at a minimum, eligibility for a baccalaureate level teaching certificate and completion of a state approved 5th year program in Guidance and Counseling. Candidates who have met this criterion may begin the certification process by successfully completing the Criterion-Referenced Exam. Successful performance on this exam will entitle the candidate to a non-renewable certificate which will be valid for three years. During this period, the candidate has the responsibility of demonstrating minimal competence in the performance areas in an actual on-the-job work setting.

It is the candidates responsibility to obtain employment. Once employment is secured, the candidate can initiate procedures aimed at Perforamnce Demonstration. These procedures represent a series of recycling activities, each of which addresses a different component of performance demonstration. The first activity involves "data collection" which is a recording function of what is evident or observed. This function is carried out by a trained data collector. It does not involve the determination of whether performance is acceptable or not. "Evaluation", the second activity, involves determining the status of performance judged against statewide minimum

standards. When a candidate has been judged to have successfully demonstrated a performance competency or competencies, the candidate will receive competency credit. If a candidate has not successfully demonstrated a specific performance competency, a diagnosis based on interpretation of the data to determine needs of the beginning counselor will be provided. This leads into the third activity, "prescription", which provides the candidate with detailed feedback and directs the candidate into staff development activities targeting the competency areas of diagnosed weakness. The cycle repeats itself until the candidate masters all the performance competencies or until the three year period ends. Upon successful performance demonstration of all the performance competencies, the counselor will receive a renewable professional certificate as a school counselor.

THE GEORGIA SCHOOL COUNSELOR COMPETENCY EXAMINATION

The rationale underlying the construction of the Georgia School Counselor Competency Exam (GSCCE) was to develop an instrument that would measure an individual's acquisition of basic knowledge competencies needed to perform on the job. Two concepts dominated the development of the instrument. First, it was felt that competencies which are required of school guidance personnel can and should only be considered as they relate to student needs. Second, the test should be designed to assess only those competencies considered essential in order for a school counselor to be considered minimally competent. Minimally competent was defined as a level of performance which would enable one to be an effective counselor at the time of

entry into a school guidance program. By focusing on these two concepts, it was felt that the instrument would be relevant to a wide variety of training programs, and therefore appropriate as part of a certification process.

Scales in the GSCCE are structured around the following four domains of school counseling:

I. Theories and Principles

This domain represents the assumptions, objectives, or philosophy which constitutes the general conceptual framework for a body of knowledge. The primary purpose of a theory is to explain and/or predict, an ability which is important in any personal venture. This domain cuts across those theories which are felt to undergird guidance activities.

II. Career Development

This domain represents a continuous and predictable process in which one engages, for skill and attitude acquisition, to facilitate a life which is rewarding to the individual and society.

III. Research, Test and Measurement

This domain represents the collection, analysis and presentation of individual and institutional data. These data provide a basis for informed personal decision making.

IV. General Education

This domain relates to the school counselor as a member of the educational team. The counselor is emerging as an educational leader, with special skills. Therefore, it is imperative that counselors have a thorough overview of the total educational enterprise and the various populations to be served.

Within each domain, there exists a set of competencies. These competencies are listed below by domain.

I. Theories and Principles

a. Knowledge of the growth and development of the child from birth to middle childhood.

b. Knowledge of the growth and development of the school age child.

c. Knowledge of theories of personality and learning.

d. Knowledge of the major concepts of the theories of individual counseling.

e. Knowledge of the tenets and cognitive aspects of the most widely used individual counseling models and/or techniques.

f. Knowledge of the theories of group counseling and group dynamics.

g. Knowledge of the regulatory legislation and ethical standards of school counseling.

II. Career Development

a. Knowledge of the theories of career development.

b. Knowledge of accepted decision making process and strategies of value clarification.

c. Knowledge of the value of leisure.

d. Knowledge of the world of work.

III. Research, Test and Measurement

a. Knowledge of the general principles and methods of assessment.

b. Knowledge of survey methods.

c. Knowledge of statistics for interpreting and using data.

IV. General Education

a. Knowledge of sociological class structure and its impact on students.

b. Knowledge of school curriculum.

c. Knowledge of co-curricular activities.

d. Knowledge of leadership patterns.

e. Knowledge of principles of sound physical and mental health.

f. Knowledge of appropriate referral resources.

TEST CHARACTERISTICS

The GSCCE is divided into four sections corresponding to the four domains. Due to the size of the exam, both a morning and afternoon testing session are required. The following table shows the various test sections, number of items and allotted testing times.

Morning Session

Domain 1: Theories and Principles

183 items - 3 hours.

Afternoon Session

Domain 11: Career Development

50 items - 1 hour

Domain 111: Research, Test and Measurement

34 items - 1/2 hour

Domain IV: General Education

77 items - 1 1/2 hours

Total: 344 items - 6 hours

Item Characteristics

All items on the GSCCE are multiple choice. Each item contains a stem and four possible answers. Since the test is designed to assess minimal essential knowledge, the examinee will tend to find most of the items on the easy side.

An examination of item difficulties shows that approximately 80 percent of the items fall between .50 and .79 difficulty. That is, 80 percent of the items were answered correctly by between 50 and 79 percent of the examinees.

Cut-off Scores

Examinee performance is evaluated in relation to predetermined cut-off scores. Each test domain as well as the total test yields a specific cut-off score. Each cut-off score is designed to establish a level at which a prospective counselor could reasonably be considered to possess the minimum amount of knowledge necessary to perform effectively. All scores are adjusted for error of measurement and for guessing. Therefore, it is to the candidates advantage to guess if he/she does not know an answer. No applicant's score will be compared with other applicants. No set percentage of applicants will pass or fail. Theoretically, all applicants taking the test during any given year could pass.

Reliability

Reliability of the GSCCE was examined from two approaches. The first represents a traditional approach which involves examining the internal consistency of each domain and the total test (KR-20 Index). This approach examines the consistency with which a set of test scores measure whatever they do measure. The second approach centers around the belief that testing is basically a decision making process. This approach generates an index which is a measure of decision-making consistency based on coefficient of agreement (Beta). In both cases, the possible range of indices

are from 0 to 1 with a higher value reflecting a greater degree of consistency. The chart below shows these two indices for the two experimental forms of the exam.

Domain	Form A KR-20	Form A Beta	Form B KR-20	Form B Beta
Theories & Principles	.91	.90	.93	.93
Career Development	.69	.83	.68	.82
Research, Test & Measurement	.62	.85	.72	.87
General Education	.83	.89	.86	.90
Total Test	.94	.94	.95	.95

Validity

Essential to the validity of the GSCCE is the definition of performance with respect to the job in question. That is, are measures obtained from the instrument relevant to the purpose for which it will be used? The GSCCE was developed with these guidelines in mind. The primary concern was to assure that the tests actually reflect subject matter content that counselors must know in order to be considered minimally competent. The major means of insuring this relevancy was through the use of content validation procedures. That is, each major step in the developmental process was examined by content specialists. Analyses involved examination of goals, objectives, and job descriptions, as well as, a review of each item. These analyses were carried out through surveys, workshops, and on-site visits.

Multiple Forms

Using a table of specifications which describes the allocation of items to competencies and domains, and unlimited number of test forms can be produced. Each form will yield scores which are comparable in terms of their cut-off score. That is, a candidate judged as passing one form would also be judged as passing a different form.

COUNSELOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS

All school counselors in the State of Georgia must be competent in six areas: 1. Planning, 2. Individual Counseling, 3. Group Facilitating, 4. Consulting, 5. Training, and 6. Information Processing. These areas are further defined in terms of sub-elements and relate to processes which produce products. Planning includes skill in overall program development and skill in designing and evaluating specific components of the counseling program. Information processing demands skill in referral, appraisal, and resource management. The remaining four competencies; counseling, facilitating, consulting and training are process competencies which require skill in communicating with others.

Each of the six areas of competence can be further described by listing the items (behaviors) which will be accepted as indicators of each competency and skill.

Planning

(Assessing Needs)

1. Identifies or constructs needs assessment instruments
2. Uses instruments
3. Uses evaluation data
4. Summarizes data
5. Conducts research projects
6. States client needs

(Designing Programs)

1. States program priorities
2. Plans for staff contact
3. Plans for student contact
4. Plans for parent contact
5. States guidance policies

(Evaluating Programs)

1. Monitors program impact
2. Follows-up on student leaving school

Individual Counseling (Communicating)

1. Puts student at ease
2. Makes purpose of session evident
3. Listens to the student
4. Is attentive
5. Encourages the student to talk freely
6. Allows the student time to respond
7. Shows acceptance
8. Communicates respect
9. Maintains objectivity
10. Helps the student explore the concern
11. Helps the student explore alternative solutions
12. Allows the student to make decisions
13. Gives clear accurate information
14. Achieves closure

Group Facilitating (Communicating)

1. Builds trust
2. Orients group
3. Sets goals
4. Sets norms
5. Communicates respect
6. Shows acceptance
7. Encourages participation
8. Intervenes at appropriate times
9. Clarifies communications
10. Elicits examination of the group process
11. Identifies blocking behaviors
12. Identifies helping behaviors
13. Examines own interaction
14. Summarizes the session
15. Uses group methods

In-Service Training
(Communicating)

1. Arranges space
2. States purpose, rationale
3. Assesses needs
4. States objectives
5. Uses appropriate materials and activities
6. Paces, varies program
7. Attends to task, content
8. Attends to process
9. Provides for active involvement
10. Reinforces participants
11. Responds to participants
12. Measures achievement of objectives
13. Conducts evaluation of session
14. Summarizes the session

Consulting
(Communicating)

1. Listens to the client
2. Clarifies verbal communications
3. Is accepting
4. Demonstrates objectivity
5. Establishes a peer relationship
6. Encourages problem analysis
7. Diagnoses problem situation
8. Identifies client attitudes toward change
9. Describes resources
10. Discusses action strategies
11. Elicits feedback
12. Explains guidance programs
13. Assists in the classroom
14. Answers questions concerning student problems
15. Works with special students
16. Plans with student for future
17. Aids in employment or financial applications
18. Plans curriculum
19. Interprets student data
20. Conducts case conferences
21. Conducts parent conferences
22. Assesses student behavior
23. Identifies exceptional students
24. Evaluates school policy

Information Processing

(Referral)

1. Maintains referral file
2. States referral policies and procedures
3. States referral criteria
4. States criteria for identifying handicaps
5. States criteria for identifying exceptionalities
6. Informs staff, students, parents of referral program
7. Consults available resources
8. Involves parents
9. Maintains contact with agencies
10. Maintains contact with referral students
11. Records referrals made
12. Visits agencies

(Appraisal)

1. Maintains file of tests
2. Maintains file of non-test devices
3. Lists sources for student appraisal
4. Objectively reports student behavior
5. Operates testing program
6. Maintains student test files

(Resource Management)

1. Maintains occupational exploration materials
2. Maintains education opportunities files
3. Surveys local job market
4. Maintains community resource file
5. Maintains drug use information
6. Maintains family planning information
7. Maintains multiethnic education materials
8. Maintains interpersonal relations materials
9. Maintains a confidential emergency medical file
10. Develops a parent information package
11. Keeps resource files current
12. Maintains materials appropriate for grade levels served
13. Makes resources accessible
14. Updates files regularly
15. Contributes to publications

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

The task of assessing on-the-job performance is basically a data collection function. That is, it is a means of recording what is evident or observed. Central to the task of data collection is the concept of "multiple observers" and "multiple input sources." For this reason each counselor is assessed by several people using different instruments. In addition, some cases require the counselor to demonstrate a given set of indicators in a variety of settings. In all cases, a trained data collector is used as part of the assessment process. Additional data will be obtained from observations or instruments filled out by principals, peers, students and support personnel. The following section details the Performance Requirements of candidates entering this section of the certification process. These requirements are designed to provide an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate the specific indicators as well as meet the requirement of multiple observers and multiple input sources.

1. Individual Counseling

    a. Participate in one 15-25 minute role play of an individual counseling session where the "student" is presenting a personal concern to the counselor.

    b. Taping two individual counseling sessions and submitting the tapes to the data collector. One session must focus on a student's personal concern; the other on a student's educational and/or career-related concern.

    c. In addition, the data collector will obtain evaluation check lists from the counselor and from three students with whom the counselor has worked.

2. Group Facilitating

   a. Conduct a group guidance session where students are discussing career-related concerns. The group will consist of 12-30 members. The group will be a new group which has not met on more than two occasions previously.

   b. Conduct two group counseling sessions with 6-12 students where students are working on a social concern, family-related problem or a problem relating to prejudice. The group will have met at least three times previously.

   c. In addition, the data collector will obtain evaluation check lists from the counselor and from three students with whom the counselor has worked in the group.

3. Consulting

   a. Tape two consulting sessions, each 30-45 minutes in length. One session must involve one or more teachers whose concern is student-related. The second session must include one or more parents and students if desirable.

   b. Write feedback summaries for each of the taped consulting sessions. During the consulting sessions the individuals or groups will plan action strategies. At a later date the counselor will obtain feedback from the consultee, may recommend further action or may terminate the relationship.

   c. In addition, the data collector will obtain evaluation check lists from the counselor and from six staff representatives.

4. In-Service Training

   a. Conduct one 1-2 hour training sessions which involves teachers and/or administrators. The purpose of the session is to train the participants to use a particular process or set of materials.

   b. In addition, the data collector will obtain evaluation check lists from the counselor and from three teachers and/or administrators who have attended one or more training sessions.

5. Information Processing

   a. Complete an Information File which contains specific documents relating to the areas of Referral, Appraisal, and other Resources. The file is submitted to the data collector who records the documents which have been submitted and rates them for completeness of essential elements.

   b. In addition, the collector will obtain resource assessment check lists from two pupil personnel workers and will obtain an evaluation check list from the principal

6. Planning

   a. Complete a Planning File which contains specific documents relating to the areas of Needs Assessment, Program Design, and Program Evaluation. The file is submitted to the data collector who records the documents which have been submitted and rates each document for completeness.

   b. In addition, the data collector will obtain evaluation check lists from five teachers and from the school principal.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Data collection is the process used to obtain evidence of sufficient or insufficient performance by counselor candidates of the skills and indicators grouped under each of six competency areas which are critical to the success of Georgia's school counselors. The process, which may take up to three years to complete, includes three steps:

1. Initial contact between the counselor and the data collector.
2. Administration and compilation of the instruments contained in each of six competency areas.
3. Delivery of the completed instruments to the person responsible for assessment of the forms.

Initial Contact

The initial contact between the counselor and the data collector may be initiated by either party. The contact should occur in the counselor's first year of service and the counselor should be encouraged to begin in the certification process immediately. During this first meeting it is advisable for the two parties to set up a tentative schedule of data collection activities that will assist the counselor in completing the process in less than two years. Many counselors will want to begin with the planning module, but they may choose to proceed through the modules in any order. The data collector may want to suggest sources of assistance to counselors who feel uncertain about any of the skills or competencies. A "trial run" may be requested by a counselor who wants to test his or her skill prior to the actual data collection session.

Administration and Compilation of Data Collection Instruments

Throughout the six modules the data collector will find that various types of instruments are to be utilized. They are:

1. Observation forms for live or video tape demonstrations
2. Listening forms for audio tape demonstrations
3. Rating scales
4. Check lists for the counselor's clients
5. Self-evaluation forms for the counselor to complete

Each module contains some of these types of instruments.

When the counselor indicates his/her readiness (or when the data collector urges it) for data collection in a given module, the

data collector distributes check lists to persons indicated in the module. Concurrently he or she administers those forms which the data collector completes during observations or review of materials. When all forms in a given area are finished, they are submitted together to the data assessor.

Although only one data collector is required, it may prove useful for two data collectors to work together and then, using the data they have recorded, complete one set of forms. This procedure may facilitate objectivity. In any case, the data collector will want to make some brief notes on the forms to indicate why a rating of insufficient has been selected especially in cases where some value judgments were necessary.

In areas where the counselor is required to demonstrate a set of skills live, on video tape or on audio tape, the counselor and data collector may agree (based on experienced users of the materials) that a live demonstration is preferable. In this case the live demonstration must be agreed to by participants or clients.

Delivery of Completed Instruments

When all forms in a given module are complete, they should be placed in a folder bearing the candidate's name and address and the data collector's name and address. The folder is submitted to the assessor who will tabulate and score the forms and make the necessary recommendations to the candidate.

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